

WAR WITHIN :
DARK AGES

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#





TRANSFORMERS WAR WITHIN

THE DARK AGES

Furman
Wildman





FIRESTORM!



THE RETURN OF JETFIRE

THE **TRANSFORMERS** GENERATION ONE

MORE THAN
MEETS
THE EYE!

#3 On Sale in
MARCH

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CYBERTRON,
THE NEUTRAL TERRITORIES...

HNNNG!

THE DARK AGES

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WELL...

THAT WAS...SHORT BUT...SPECTACULAR.



THAT, BLUDGEON... WAS SOMETHING YOU AND YOUR FELLOW ACOLYTES SHOULD HAVE MANAGED WITHOUT ME.

...

BRING HIM, AND THE SECOND, THE TIME FOR CONCEALMENT HAS CLEARLY PASSED. WE MUST--



--HAVE ME CONFUSED FOR SOMEONE ELSE!

SOMEONE BIT SOFT. OPTIMUS PRIME MAYBE.



YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED DOWN, GRIMLOCK. BUT IF IT'S MORE PUNISHMENT YOU'RE AFTER...

...I'M ONLY TOO HAPPY TO OBLIGE...



NOT
YOU.

THWANG!



YOU.

HAD BUSINESS
HERE...WITH HIM. AND
YOU *INTERFERED*. SMALL
MATTER OF *EXECUTION*.
FOR TREASON.

BE
RIGHT WITH YOU,
JETFIRE.

YOU HAVE
NO *IDEA* WHAT YOU
FACE. NOT A CLUE.

HE DOES, JETFIRE.
OH, NOT SPECIFICALLY,
BUT HE UNDERSTANDS
ENOUGH TO KNOW
THAT FIGHT OR FLIGHT
ARE EQUALLY *FUTILE*.

YOU, ON
THE OTHER
HAND...



SMASH!



ZAZAK!



...REQUIRE FURTHER
EDUCATION.



YOU...

YOU'RE FROM
BEFORE. AREN'T YOU?
BEFORE THE *GOLDEN AGE*,
BEFORE RECORDED TIME.

YOU KNOW SO LITTLE...
ABOUT WHO AND WHAT YOU
ARE, ABOUT THE FORCES AT
WORK AROUND YOU... *BENEATH*
YOU. THE *GOLDEN AGE*--*HEH*.



WELCOME,
JETFIRE...

...TO
THE *DARK*
AGE!



WE MUST ACCELERATE
THE UNBINDING. IF JETFIRE
SENSED MY HAND IN RECENT
EVENTS, OTHERS MAY TOO.

FIND AND
SECURE THE *THIRD*.
IMMEDIATELY.



IT'LL BE A
PLEASURE!

AND THE
FOURTH? HOW DO
WE GET AT HIM?!



LEAVE THE
FOURTH...

...TO ME.



MINDWIPE, BUGLY--
LET'S GO. AND THIS
TIME...NO MISTAKES.



FORMER HUB-CAPITAL,
IACON.

AUTOBASE:

LET'S FACE IT,
PROWL, THAT *WASN'T*
OUR FINEST HOUR.

NO. NO IT
WASN'T, BUT IT
WAS A WAKE-UP
CALL.

WHILE WE SIT BACK,
TRYING TO PLAY BY THE
RULES, THE DECEPTICONS
KEEP *UPPING* THE
STAKES.

OW!
A-AH!

KEEP STILL,
SKIDS.

FIRST *DEVASTATOR*,
THEN THAT *EXPERIMENT*
WE HAVE *CAGED* DOWN
IN LEVEL ZERO...

...AND NOW *TRYPTICON*,
A MOBILE BATTLE STATION,
ARMY AND BASE, ALL ROLLED
INTO ONE APOCALYPTIC
PACKAGE.

IT'S A VICIOUS CIRCLE.
THEY ESCALATE, WE'RE
FORCED TO RESPOND IN
KIND, THE WAR STEPS UP
ANOTHER NOTCH IN SCALE.

JUST LOOK AT
THE WHOLE SPECIAL
TEAMS *FIASCO*. IT'S OUT
OF CONTROL, IT'S--

...ALL...
FALLING...
APART.

HUH?



SOMETHING JETFIRE SAID,
JUST BEFORE WE GOT YOUR
DISTRESS CALL. HE SEEMED TO
THINK...WELL, THAT THERE WAS A
PATTERN, THAT ALL THIS...IT
WASN'T JUST RANDOM ACTION
AND REACTION.



OH? AND WHERE *IS*
JETFIRE? IF HE WAS HERE,
THEN HE SHOULD HAVE
RESPONDED TO--

PROWL, HOUND,
TRAILBREAKER...I THINK
YOU'D BETTER COME
SEE THIS.



AND...

YEAH, *JETFIRE*.
GRIMLOCK INTERCEPTED
A TRANSMISSION FROM
AUTOBASE, YOUR 'BOT AND
SHOCKWAVE SET UP A MEET
HERE, IN THE NEUTRAL
TERRITORIES.

WE LEFT GRIMLOCK
TO SORT IT OUT.
AND, WELL...



...MAYBE THAT
WASN'T SUCH A
GOOD IDEA
AFTER ALL.

NO SIGN OF HIM,
JETFIRE OR SHOCKWAVE.
SOMETHING WENT DOWN
HERE, THOUGH...AND
SOMEONE GOT HURT.



SEE WHAT MORE YOU
CAN LEARN THERE, *SWOOP*.
WE'LL ACCESS JETFIRE'S PERSONAL
LOG, TRY AND FIND OUT *EXACTLY* WHAT
HE WAS UP TO. SUGGEST WE KEEP
AN *OPEN* CHANNEL.

YEAH, RIGHT.
KIND OF LIKE OLD
TIMES, EH?

SWOOP
OUT.



EITHER JET FIRE'S DECIDED
HE'S LOST HIS MIND OR ELSEWHERE.
AGAIN. OR WE'RE FACING SOMETHING
ELSE, SOMETHING BIGGER AROUND
GET ME SOME ANSWERS

SURE,
I'LL...



THAT'S
THE INTRUDER ALERT
SIGNAL. WE'RE UNDER
ATTACK!

WHERE FROM?
ALL EXTERNAL WATCHING
POSTS REPORT CLEAR



WAIT! THE
ALERT IS INTERNAL LEVEL
ZERO. JAZZ, MIRAGE AND
SUNSTREAKER ARE
RESPONDING

DEAD AIR
FROM THE DUTY
GUARDS

LEVEL ZERO?
BUT THAT'S
WHERE

YES



LEVEL ZERO

WE'RE NOT
STOPPING 'T'

I KNOW

THE SIMPLE
FACT OF LIFE IS THIS:
YOU ARE BETWEEN
ME



D-43

AND
THAT WHICH
I SEEK

REMOVE
YOURSELVES OR
MEET YOUR
MAKER

SOONER
RATHER THAN
LATER

IACON, THE FORMER
HIGH COUNCIL PAVILIONS

I DON'T
GET IT

ME
EITHER

WE KNOW
THE MASS INTELLECT
PROCESS WAS COMPLETELY
OVERHAULED BY THE AUTOBOT
SCIENCE HARMONIUM.

THE DUMBING-
DOWN PROBLEMS INHERENT IN
THE DEVASTATOR PROTOTYPE
WERE SUPPOSEDLY DEALT WITH

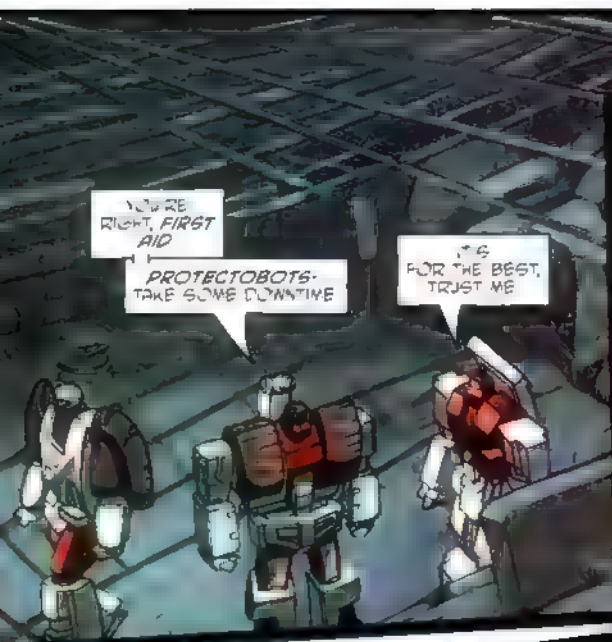
DEFENSOR'S
COMPARTMENTALIZED NEURAL
PROCESSOR SHOULD MAINTAIN
THE INTEGRITY OF OUR INDIVIDUAL
BRAINWAVE PATTERNS, WHILE
DRAWING ON EACH FOR AN
INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE

AND YET, WHEN
WE COMBINED TO FIGHT
DEVASTATOR, WE PRETTY
MUCH LOST IT

WHY,
STREETWISE-
WHY?

ENOUGH! YOU'RE
TIRED, HOTSPOT. WE'RE
ALL TIRED. SINCE THE BATTLE,
WE'VE REVIEWED, SCRUTINIZED
AND ANALYZED EVERY OFFICIAL
OR CLASSIFIED SCHEMATIC AND
DATASAMPLE AVAILABLE ON THE
COMBINER PROCESS.

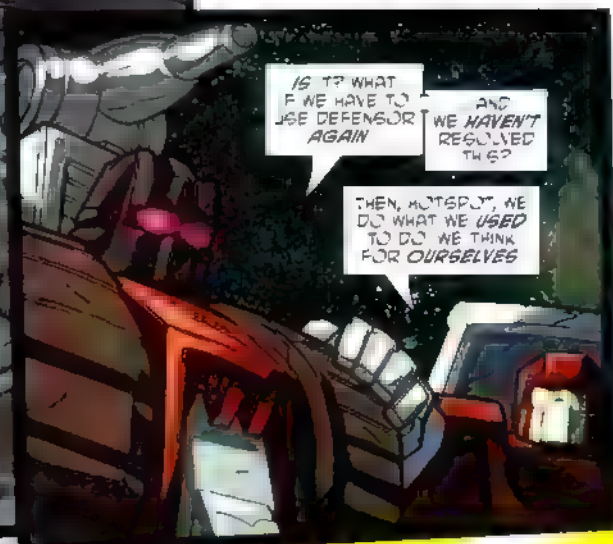
LET IT
GO FOR NOW
AT LEAST



YOU'RE
RIGHT, FIRST
AID

PROTECTOBOTS-
TAKE SOME DOWNTIME

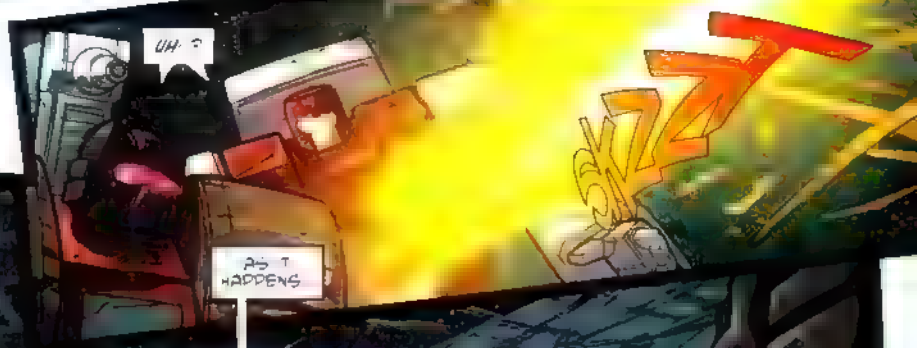
IT'S
FOR THE BEST,
TRUST ME



IS IT WHAT
IF WE HAVE TO
USE DEFENSOR
AGAIN

AND
WE HAVEN'T
RESOLVED
THIS?

THEN, HOTOBOT, WE
DO WHAT WE USED
TO DO. WE THINK
FOR OURSELVES



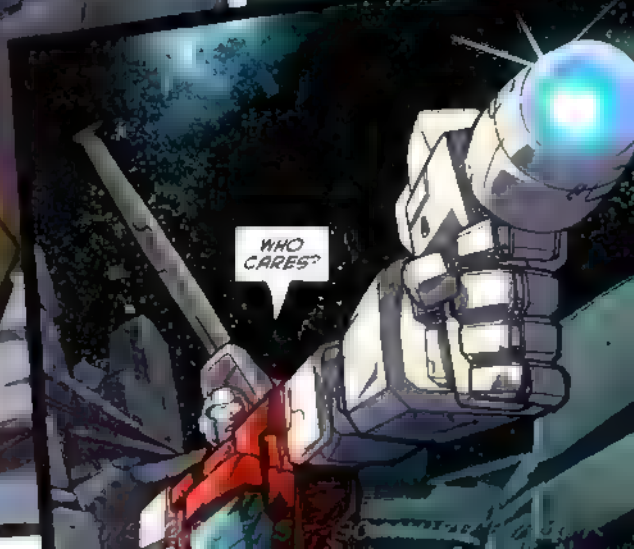
UH?

AS IT
HAPPENS

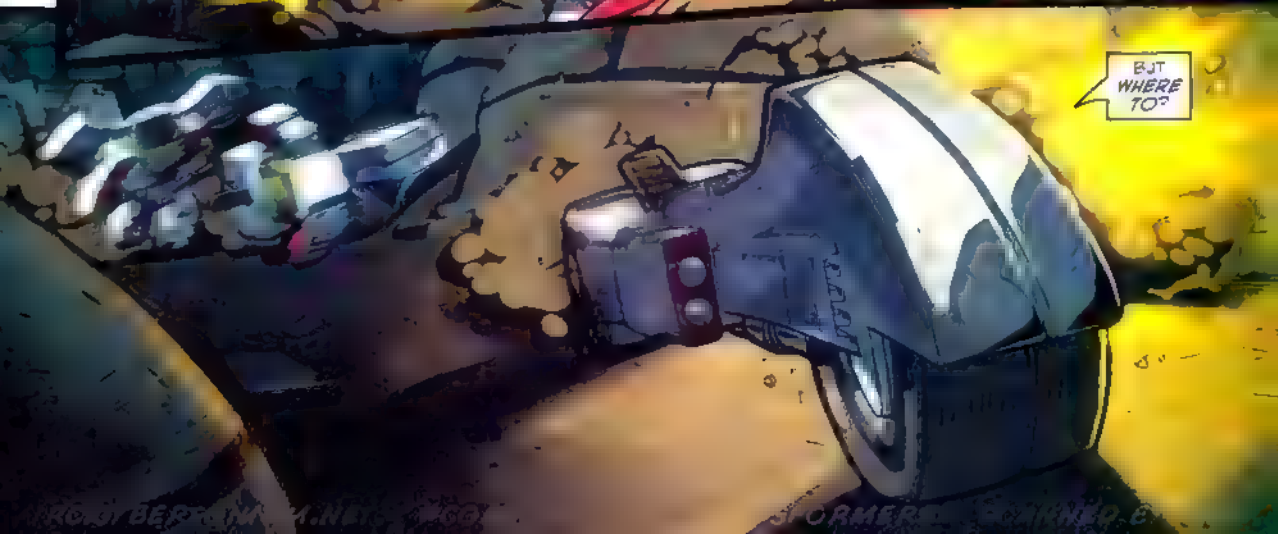


...THAT SITS
US DOWN TO
THE GROUND!

WHO?!



WHO
CARES?

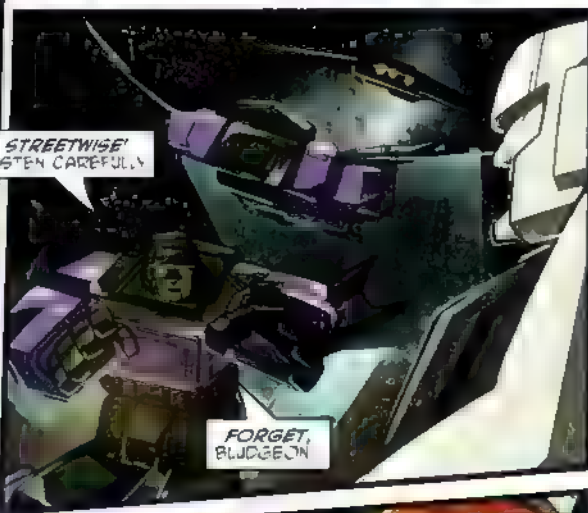




WE'RE
PENNED IN DOWN
HERE!



GUTCHA
DEAD TO



STREETWISE!
LISTEN CAREFULLY

FORGET,
BLUDGEON



SHOOT
FIRST AID

OKAY

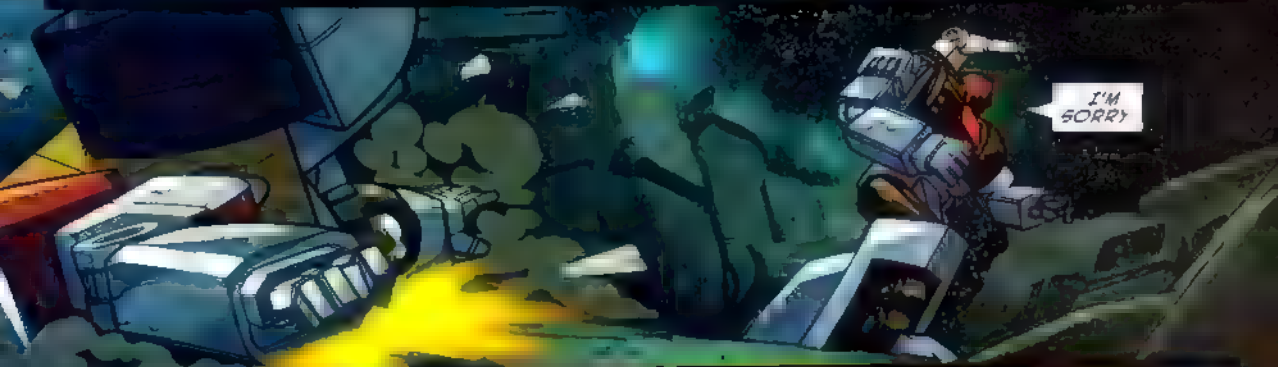
WOW!

FN-AAH!



HOTSPOT THEY'RE
TURNING PROTECTOBOT
AGAINST PROTECTOBOT!

INITIATE THE
INTERLINK. I SHOULD
OVERRIDE THEIR CONTROL.
WE NEED DEFENSE!



AUTOBASE,
LEVEL ZERO

I ADMIRE YOUR
STUBBORNNESS, YOUR
STUBBORN REFUSAL TO ADMIT
A LOST CAUSE. BUT THERE IS
A THIN LINE BETWEEN
TENACITY

AND
STUPIDITY



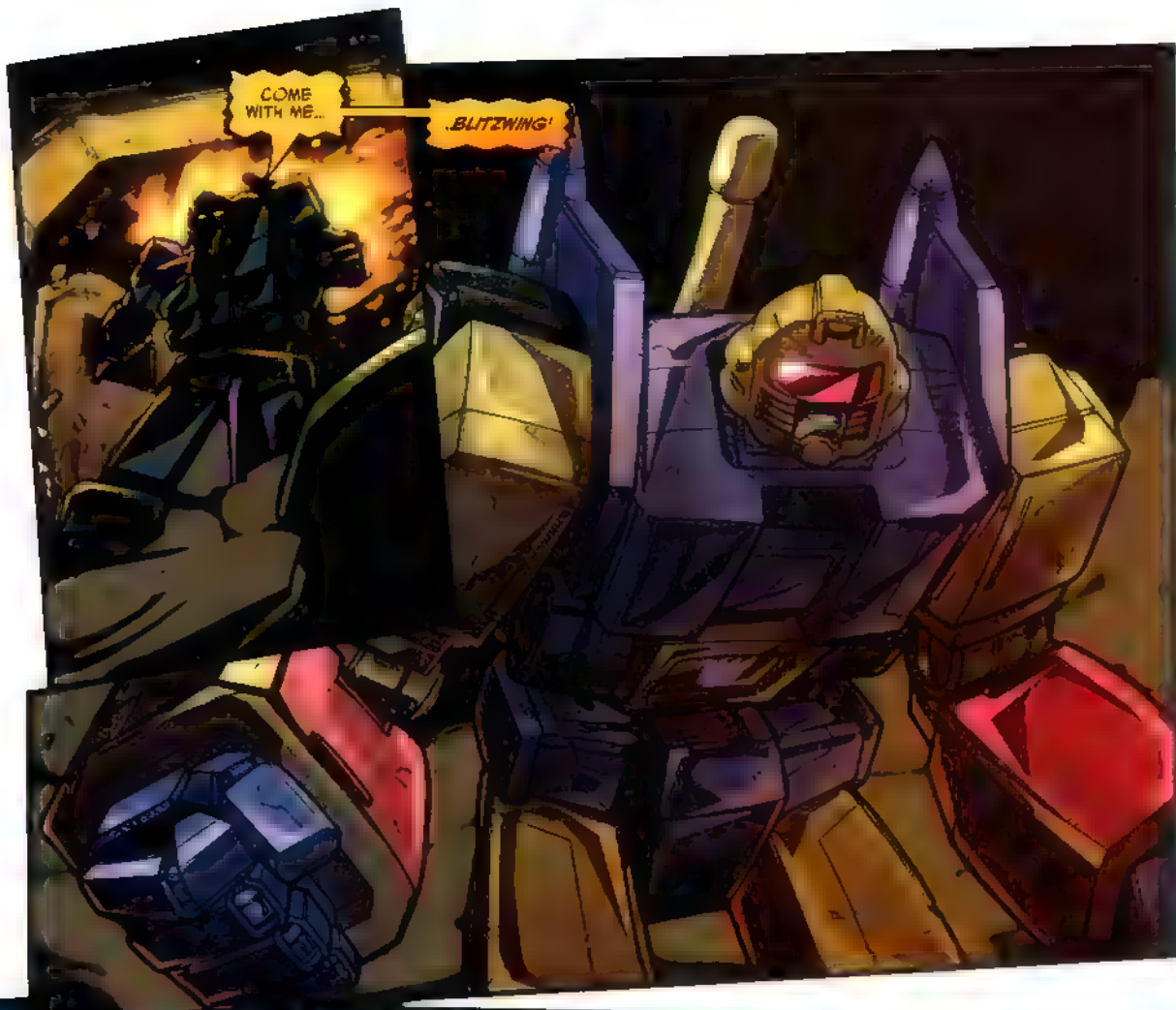
Why?

AND
YOU CROSSED IT
SEVERAL MOMENTS
AGO

RIGHT?
THAT'S IT.

THIS IS GOING
TO HURT YOU MORE
THAN IT HURTS ME





BUMBLEBEE'S SET UP
A LEVEL ONE CONTAINMENT
FIELD WITH A CODED SUBSPACE
PERIMETER. NO ONE GETS OUT
NO ONE GOES IN.

BUT...

WHAT ABOUT THE
AUTOBOTS ALREADY
DOWN THERE? WE
CAN'T JUST ABANDON
THEM!

THEY COULD
BE INJURED, OR
WORSE

I'M
SORRY

SHOCKWAVE INVESTED AN
AWFUL LOT OF TIME AND RESOURCES
IN THAT ONE INDIVIDUAL, AND IT COST US
ALMOST AS MUCH TO FRUSTRATE HIS
EFFORTS. WHATEVER IT IS, OR IS
GOING TO BE

I'M NOT ABOUT
TO LET IT JUST WALK
OUT OF HERE

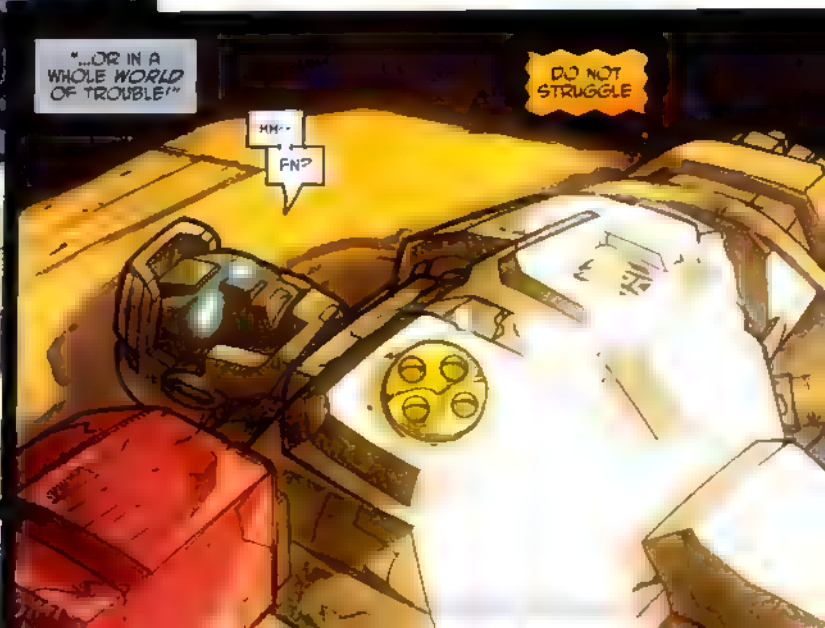
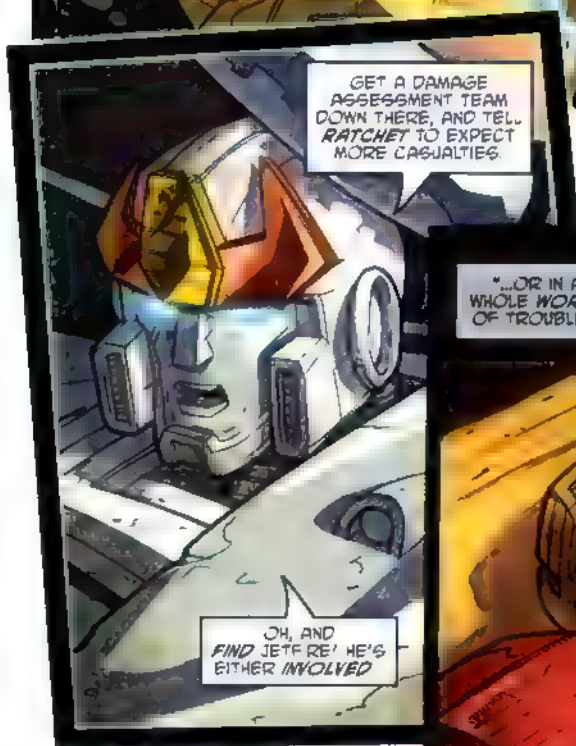
BUT

MAANG
ON!

WHATEVER WE VE
CAUGHT IS THERE. IT'S
SPITTING MAD THE SHIELD'S
HOLDING, BUT

I DON'T
KNOW HOW

BOONNG





WH-?

DO NOT
SPEAK.



UNDERSTAND
SIMPLY THAT YOU ARE
CASUALTIES OF WAR

NOT THIS
INSIGNIFICANT
ENGAGEMENT..



A WAR...



...OF THE
GODS!

FOR EONS, A **STALEMATE**:
TWO EQUAL AND OPPOSITE
FORCES LOCKED AWAY FROM
EACH OTHER, THE ONE **EXILED**,
THE OTHER **HIDDEN**.



UNTIL NOW,
THE SEAL OF **PRIMUS**
WILL BREAK...



...AND ALL
CHAOS WILL
FOLLOW!

TO BE CONCLUDED...

DECLARATIONS OF WAR

Here's what's 'within' the Declarations of War mailbag this month!

Is there going to be more Transformers: War Within after The Dark Ages?

Phil

Definitely, Phil! There are still several MILLION years between The Dark Ages and the time of the Generation One series, allowing plenty of room to tell more stories of the pre-earth Transformers. Look for more info on the future of Transformers War Within next month!

Dark Ages is the greatest. It reminds me of the TF stories by that other company in the UK that shall remain nameless. Especially with artwork by Andrew Wildman (which is awesome), the presence of the Wreckers, and I thought it was great how Grimlock almost called Swoop "Divebomb." I know I'm not the only one who got that line. Other good stuff: Ratbat, Devastator vs Defensor, Jetfire, Trypticon. I can't wait to see how this plays out, or how Optimus and Megatron get back. Who knows, maybe they won't until volume 3, that'd be a nice cliffhanger. The Fallen is so bad-ass, and I love seeing Bludgeon, he's always been one of my favorites (right after Grimlock of course). I loved him being the silent warrior in Worlds Collide, and now we see him without his Pretender shell. War Within definitely gives you a closer look at where some of our favorites came from. I mean, all the major players are in different factions now: Prowl and Jazz are with the Autobots, Ironhide, Grimlock and Kup are with the LSC, the Wreckers are on their own, the combiners are on their own. Interesting to see how things fall apart without Prime, I can't wait to see what brings them all back together. I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Simon Furman is the man!!! And the best part is, Brad Mick and Simon Furman are working closely on this so that what happens in War Within can be carried over into G1 i.e. Ironhide and Kup reuniting in G1 volume 2. Questions:

- 1) Can you please show Ultra Magnus in the volume 3?
 - 2) How about other characters like pre-Headmasters Scorponok and Fort Max in volume 3 as well?
- That's all for now, keep up the good work. Your TF books just keep getting better and better.

Tobias May
Naperville, IL

- 1) A glimpse of "War Within Ultra Magnus" can actually be seen in a flashback scene in

Transformers: Generation One Vol.2 #6, so you know for sure that he played some part in that era...

2) Well, we've already seen pre-Pretenders like Bugly and Bludgeon, as well as some pre-Triple Changers like Springer and Blitzwing...could pre-Headmasters be far behind? Keep reading!

Absolutely loved the new issue. Between this and the G1 series I get my Transformers fix every month. Quick question though. Any chance of having a War Within: More than Meets the Eye? If ever there should be a More Than Meets The Eye series it should be for this book. Don Figueroa's designs are incredible. He keeps what is the heart of the character, yet the retro-cybertronian modes are awesome.

We the fans need this series.

Thanks
Rob Messick

For now Rob, you'll have to make due with MTMTE: Transformers Generation One, and the all-new MTMTE: Transformers Armada profiles series. But...an official guide to the War Within WOULD be a welcome addition to the MTMTE line-up, as well as a great opportunity to show off artist extraordinaire Don Figueroa's amazing design work. So, a quick message to all you War Within fans, keep writing in and show us how much you want a MTMTE: Transformers War Within Official Guidebook!

Join us next month for the cybertron-shattering conclusion to Transformers: War Within 'The Dark Ages'!

ROGER LEE
Editor-in-Chief,
Dreamwave Productions



FAN ART BY RYAN WILTON



#6 NEXT MONTH

The shocking conclusion! At the very heart of the planet, the Fallen prepares to crack the seal on the Well of All Sparks, lighting CYBERTRON up like a beacon. Somehow SHOCKWAVE must convince the AUTOBOTS to bolster his all-out attack on the Fallen...before it's too late for them all.

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Vol. 284, February 2294; Vol. 285, February 2295; Vol. 286, February 2296; Vol. 287, February 2297; Vol. 288, February 2298; Vol. 289, February 2299; Vol. 290, February 2300; Vol. 291, February 2301; Vol. 292, February 2302; Vol. 293, February 2303; Vol. 294, February 2304; Vol. 295, February 2305; Vol. 296, February 2306; Vol. 297, February 2307; Vol. 298, February 2308; Vol. 299, February 2309; Vol. 300, February 2310; Vol. 301, February 2311; Vol. 302, February 2312; Vol. 303, February 2313; Vol. 304, February 2314; Vol. 305, February 2315; Vol. 306, February 2316; Vol. 307, February 2317; Vol. 308, February 2318; Vol. 309, February 2319; Vol. 310, February 2320; Vol. 311, February 2321; Vol. 312, February 2322; Vol. 313, February 2323; Vol. 314, February 2324; Vol. 315, February 2325; Vol. 316, February 2326; Vol. 317, February 2327; Vol. 318, February 2328; Vol. 319, February 2329; Vol. 320, February 2330; Vol. 321, February 2331; Vol. 322, February 2332; Vol. 323, February 2333; Vol. 324, February 2334; Vol. 325, February 2335; Vol. 326, February 2336; Vol. 327, February 2337; Vol. 328, February 2338; Vol. 329, February 2339; Vol. 330, February 2340; Vol. 331, February 2341; Vol. 332, February 2342; Vol. 333, February 2343; Vol. 334, February 2344; Vol. 335, February 2345; Vol. 336, February 2346; Vol. 337, February 2347; Vol. 338, February 2348; Vol. 339, February 2349; Vol. 340, February 2350; Vol. 341, February 2351; Vol. 342, February 2352; Vol. 343, February 2353; Vol. 344, February 2354; Vol. 345, February 2355; Vol. 346, February 2356; Vol. 347, February 2357; Vol. 348, February 2358; Vol. 349, February 2359; Vol. 350, February 2360; Vol. 351, February 2361; Vol. 352, February 2362; Vol. 353, February 2363; Vol. 354, February 2364; Vol. 355, February 2365; Vol. 356, February 2366; Vol. 357, February 2367; Vol. 358, February 2368; Vol. 359, February 2369; Vol. 360, February 2370; Vol. 361, February 2371; Vol. 362, February 2372; Vol. 363, February 2373; 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THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THE TRANSFORMERS IS BACK!

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WAR WITHIN
-THE DARK AGES-
#5**



**TRANSFORMERS:
GENERATION ONE
"WAR & PEACE"
TPB**



FROM THE DESK OF JOHN NEY RIEBER

TITLE: BASE OF OPERATIONS:
Writer Southern USA y'all

CURRENT PROJECTS:
Top-secret Projects for Dreamwave, G.I. Joe: Rekindled

PAST PROJECTS:
Shadows Fall Tell Me, Dark Books of Magic, Captain America: Transformers/G.I. Joe. And a number of short comic stories that I'm really fond of, but will probably never see reprinted.

FAVORITE SAYINGS:
"It's a funny world. If you're paying attention."
"What's up with that?"

AUTOBOTS VS. JOES, WHO WINS?

Tough to say, without specifying which incarnation of the two teams we're talking about...or why they're fighting. The Autobots definitely have the edge on the Joes...physically. But the Autobots are nice. They don't have the Joes' drive or killer instincts.

I'm going to miss those giant robots.

The Joes aren't finished with me yet—or I'm not through with them, depending on your view of the relationship between writers and the fictional characters who own, borrow, steal, or rent them. But the Transformers...

I'm going to miss those guys. Though I must admit that I'm one of a handful of human beings on this planet who can say, with absolute truthfulness: I know exactly what it feels like to be totally at the mercy of an evil Decepticon horde.

Neither Joe Lee nor I really knew what we were getting into when we accepted Dreamwave's TRANSFORMERS/G.I. JOE challenge. There've been moments in the course of the past eight months when I wished I'd done the math before I dived into the project. I'm a character-oriented writer—character-driven might be a more accurate

description. And by the time I'd grasped the full implications of scripting a six-chapter, 132-page adventure story with a core cast of almost forty strong and distinct main characters, it was too late. I was surrounded. The Joes and the Cobras, the Autobots and the Decepticons...they owned me.

It's a lot harder than it may look from a distance, writing—or drawing—a team book. Let alone a four-team book.

But it's also a lot more fun.

Thanks for the rides, guys—Optimus, Iron Hide, Grimlock, Hound, Bumblebee...

I'll never forget.

There's a little giant robot in all of us.

JOHN NEY RIEBER
January 20, 2004

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